

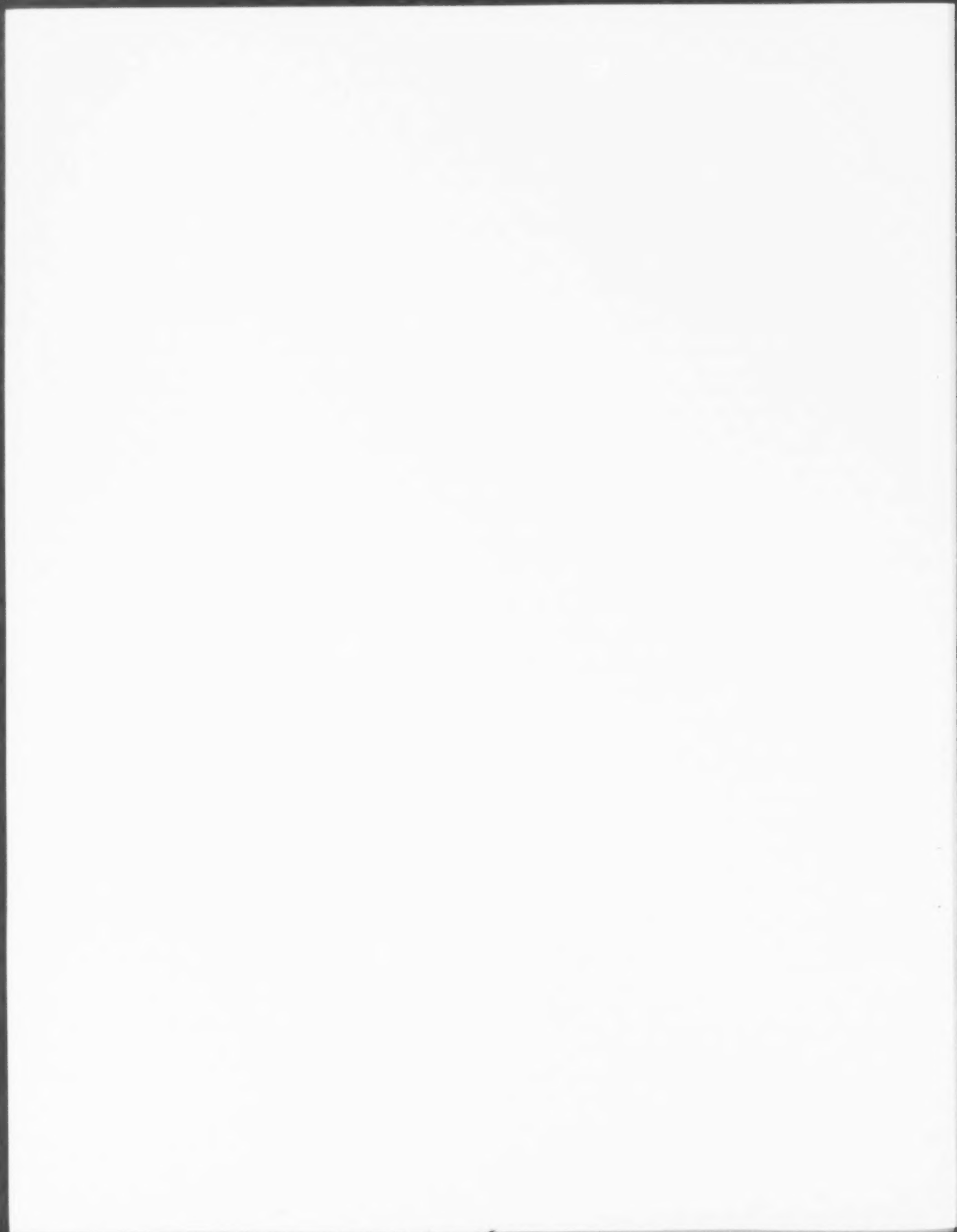
*Saskatchewan
Centennial 2005*

100 YEARS OF HEART



2005-2006 PROVINCIAL BUDGET
PERFORMANCE PLAN

SASKATCHEWAN ENVIRONMENT



Minister's Message

I am pleased to present Saskatchewan Environment's performance plan for 2005-06.

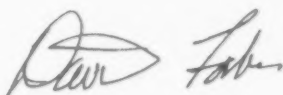
Saskatchewan Environment is anticipating an exciting year as the Province celebrates our 100th anniversary in 2005, with many special activities planned for provincial parks.

For 2005-06, the Department has made refinements to three of the 13 objectives in the performance plan, but essentially continues the gradual shift in direction started last year.

This shift in direction includes greater emphasis on self compliance and shared responsibility, which are seen as key characteristics of managing emerging environmental issues. Some of the key actions for 2005-06 that contribute to this shift include developing a government-wide Green Strategy which will establish more integrated and shared responsibility for environmental protection and resource management, continue implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Safe Drinking Water Strategy, begin renewal of the Province's fire fighting air fleet, and follow through on recommendations of the Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy Review. Saskatchewan Environment will also begin implementing a risk-based compliance plan and complete development of a plan to guide the future direction of provincial parks.

The Department will build on improvements made to the organizational structure in 2004-05, which were intended to strengthen accountability and integration of department activities, as well as to better position the Department to undertake the strategic shifts needed to address emerging environmental challenges.

I commit to having the Department complete the actions identified in this plan and to report on our progress in the Annual Report in July 2006. I am confident this plan will help us work together to achieve the objectives for this term.



David Forbes
Minister of Environment

Who We Are

The mandate of the Department is to protect and manage Saskatchewan's environmental and natural resources, so as to maintain a high level of environmental quality, ensure sustainable development, and provide economic and social benefits for present and future generations.

KEY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Department works to fulfill this mandate by promoting stewardship of the air, land, water, and wild plants and animals. Key responsibilities in relation to natural resources include forest management, forest fire suppression, parks, Crown land, and fish and wildlife management. Saskatchewan Environment also has management responsibilities to prevent pollution of provincial air, water and land, which it delivers through activities such as co-ordinating the environmental assessment process, air quality monitoring, water quality management and activities to control potential impacts of contaminated sites, hazardous goods, landfills and other similar sources of pollution.

Saskatchewan Environment recognizes that effective environmental stewardship requires self compliance and shared responsibility for the decisions made and actions needed among stakeholders and the public. Saskatchewan Environment uses processes of co-management, partnership, public involvement, and communications and education to build understanding among individuals and organizations of environmental challenges and to ensure that decisions needed are understood and well informed by a wide range of community, economic and individual concerns.

Some of the legislation administered by Saskatchewan Environment that comprises the major tools for ensuring sustainable development and effective pollution prevention and management throughout the Province include: *The Environmental Assessment Act, The Environmental Management and Protection Act, The Forest Resources Management Act, The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, The Wildlife Act, and The Public Lands Act.*

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

In 2004-05, Saskatchewan Environment undertook a fundamental transformation in its organizational structure to improve management accountability and department integration, as well as to position the Department to undertake the strategic shifts needed to address emerging environmental management challenges. The complex EcoRegion matrix reporting structure was replaced with a direct-line reporting structure meant to improve responsiveness to public requests and benefit the management of our environment and natural resources over the long-term. In 2005-06, the Department will continue to fine-tune the Department organization to improve on the delivery of its mandate.

Program management and delivery are provided by the Compliance, Fire and Forest Division and the Resource and Environmental Stewardship Division. Each has a provincial mandate. The Compliance, Fire and Forest Division is responsible for field and compliance services, fire management and forest ecosystems. The Resource and Environmental Stewardship Division is responsible for environmental protection, Crown lands, parks, and fish and wildlife resource management.

The Planning and Risk Analysis Division is responsible for key corporate strategic services, including green policy development; environmental assessment; strategic environmental studies, including the Great Sand Hills study; risk analysis; corporate evaluation; strategic planning; policy and legislative services; and intergovernmental and Aboriginal affairs.

Corporate Services provide strategic and operational support for financial, human resources, property and information management services, as well as general administration with central government agencies.

Communications Branch delivers strategic communications and encourages information exchange, increased participation in department programs, public input into policy and program development and co-ordinates communications with other government departments.

The Department maintains 52 field offices strategically located in communities throughout the Province and delivers a broad range of programs with 1,292.8 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions.

KEY PARTNERS

Goal 1 of the plan "Reduced Risks to Clean and Healthy Ecosystems" is in part dependent on the success of recycling programs offered by SARCAN, (www.sarcsarcan.ca) a major recipient of third party funding from the Department, and independent industry-created organizations like the Saskatchewan Scrap Tire Corporation (www.scraptire.sk.ca) and Saskatchewan Association of Resource Recovery Corporation (www.usedoilrecycling.com). Saskatchewan Environment administers the legislation governing these organizations, but has no direct influence over their performance of recycling activities.

The Urban Park Authorities receive funding from Saskatchewan Environment and they independently operate their respective parks. Saskatchewan Environment also funds the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority.

The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority (SWA) is now responsible for protecting, conserving and managing the surface and groundwater resources of the Province. The Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Environment is the Chair of the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Board of Directors. Saskatchewan Environment and SWA work closely with other partners to ensure safety and quality of water sources in the Province.

For details of third party funding please see Saskatchewan Environment's 2005-06 Financial Overview.

KEY CROSS-GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

Saskatchewan Environment leads the delivery of the Safe Drinking Water Strategy (www.se.gov.sk.ca) in association with Saskatchewan Health, Regional Health Authorities, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, Saskatchewan Government Relations and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. Saskatchewan Environment also leads development of the government-wide Green Strategy in collaboration with Saskatchewan Industry and Resources, Crown Investment Corporation, Saskatchewan Government Relations, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food and Executive Council.

Saskatchewan Environment works in partnership with First Nations and Métis organizations to pursue environmental and resource management goals. The Department also co-operates with federal government organizations (including Environment Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and Natural Resources Canada) where we share jurisdiction.

Plan at a Glance

The 2005-06 Performance Plan builds on the 2004-05 Performance Plan released to the public in March 2004. The goals and objectives of the plan are to be realized over the long-term, but the key actions listed are to be implemented during the 2005-06 fiscal year. As environmental and sustainable renewable resource management trends and issues change over time, the performance plan will evolve to respond to these changes.

The Department will report to the public on the progress made in implementing the key actions under each goal and objective of this performance plan in its 2005-06 Annual Report and will also be reporting on measurement results.

VISION - A high quality environment and healthy ecosystems in perpetuity, which sustain social, health and economic well-being for Saskatchewan citizens

GOAL 1

Reduced risks to clean and healthy ecosystems

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Reduced impacts to surface and groundwater quality*

Performance Measure:

- Water Quality Index ratings for watersheds within the Province

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Reduced risks to the health of the people and the environment from air quality*

Performance Measure:

- Per cent of time the rating from the Air Pollution Index is good to excellent in Regina and Saskatoon (based on an annual average)

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Reduced risks to people and the environment from contaminated land*

Performance Measures:

- Recycling rates for the following:
 - ~ Scrap tires
 - ~ Beverage containers
 - ~ Pesticide containers
 - ~ Used oil
 - ~ Paint
 - ~ E-waste
- Per cent of mines with financial assurances in place
- Per cent of mines with decommissioning and reclamation plans in place

OBJECTIVE 4 – *Healthy ecosystems that support native biological diversity are stable and capable of self-repair*

Performance Measure:

- Number of hectares in the Representative Areas Network

GOAL 2

People, resources and property values at risk from wildfires are protected

OBJECTIVE 1 – Fire suppression targeted to prioritized values at risk

Performance Measures:

- Per cent of fires in the full response zone contained to 10 hectares or less
- Per cent of escaped fires in the full response zone that are larger than 100 hectares

OBJECTIVE 2 – Increased capacity of individuals, communities, industries and others to take responsibility for reducing fire hazards and wildfires

Performance Measure:

- Percentage of human-caused wildland fires

GOAL 3

Fair opportunity for sustainable use and enjoyment of renewable resources

OBJECTIVE 1 – Equitable allocation of natural renewable resources

Performance Measure:

- Number of hectares of Crown land under Integrated Land Use Plans

OBJECTIVE 2 – Accessible recreation and educational opportunities on provincial park and Crown resource lands

Performance Measures:

- Number of provincial park visitations
- Per cent of survey respondents indicating satisfaction with their park visit

OBJECTIVE 3 – Increased economic benefits based on sustainable use of natural renewable resources

Performance Measures:

- Number of hectares of Crown lands within the provincial forest having a suite of sustainable management tools in place

- Dollar value of commercial fishing and aquaculture production
- Economic impact of Saskatchewan's provincial parks
- Number of angling licences sold

GOAL 4

Shared environmental stewardship

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Comprehensive and integrated environmental strategies*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 – *First Nations and Métis rights and interests are met through co-operative means*

Performance Measure:

- Number of co-operative relationships with First Nations and Métis groups

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Strengthened and comprehensive compliance strategies*

Performance Measure:

- Number of municipal waterworks which meet minimum treatment requirements

OBJECTIVE 4 – *Effective and efficient environmental approval and regulatory processes*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The 2004-05 Performance Plan was distributed to more than 100 of Saskatchewan Environment's key stakeholder groups.

Because of the change in the Department's strategic direction and organizational structure in 2004-05, both the Minister and the Deputy Minister attended meetings with key stakeholder groups in addition to a number of other government departments and agencies prior to and after the 2004 budget. Stakeholders have been supportive of the Department's gradual shift in direction, while also retaining support for Saskatchewan Environment's traditional services.

In addition, more than 70 meetings were held in 2004-05 with a wide range of stakeholders focussed around the Department's development of a Green Strategy. Informal discussions with stakeholders have provided areas where representatives from the economic and environmental sectors share similar points of view. These common themes will form the foundation for a proposed framework and for a public consultation document. Further and more formal consultation with stakeholders to help guide development of the Green Strategy will be held in 2005-06.

2005-06 Financial Overview

Saskatchewan Environment will spend \$172.036 million in 2005-06 to deliver its programs and services throughout the Province. The distribution of department spending by program area is shown below.

2005-06 ESTIMATES	<i>(in thousands of dollars)</i>
Central Management and Services	\$18,781
Compliance and Field Services	13,367
Forest Services	13,725
Fire Management and Forest Protection	89,045
Environmental Protection and Water Management	23,728
Resource Stewardship	7,371
Fish and Wildlife Development Fund	3,702
Parks	13,661
Planning and Risk Analysis	5,336
Total Appropriation	\$188,716
Capital Acquisitions	(20,765)
Amortization	4,085
Total Expense	\$172,036
FTE Staff Complement	1,292.8
REVENUES	\$45,949

For 2005-06, a significant change in budget is the increased funding for the Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch. This funding level marks the beginning of delivering a 10-year fire fleet renewal program. Also effective April 1, 2005, Saskatchewan Property Management will be transferring numerous buildings located in provincial parks to the Department of Environment, resulting in increased amortization expense for the Department.

In 2005-06, Central Management and Services subvote replaces the previous Administration subvote. In addition, Saskatchewan Environment has consolidated all water and environmental specialists into one subvote, renamed Environmental Protection and Water Management.

Transfers to third parties for 2005-06 are budgeted as follows:

<i>(in thousands of dollars)</i>	
Beverage Container Collection and Recycling System	10,648
Saskatchewan Watershed Authority	6,165
Fish and Wildlife Development Fund	3,702
Meewasin Valley Authority	814
Wakamow Valley Authority	139
Wascana Centre Authority	2,700
Pehonan Parkway (Prince Albert) Authority	132
Swift Current Chinook Parkway	86
Regional Parks	75
Support for Environmental Programs	80
Total	\$24,541

Saskatchewan Environment generates revenues of approximately \$62 million annually. This is comprised of approximately \$45.6 million to the provincial General Revenue Fund and approximately \$16.4 million additional revenues through other funds that are used to benefit the Province in a variety of ways. Revenues generated by Saskatchewan Environment are derived from hunting and angling licences, environmental handling charges, forestry fees and dues, Crown land dispositions, receipts from other governments for recoverable fire suppression costs and park related activities and services. In addition, revenues from Crown land dispositions also benefit the north. Approximately \$4 million annually accrues to the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account from revenue generated from land dispositions in northern Saskatchewan.

Trends and Issues

Saskatchewan Environment is increasingly structuring its scan for trends and issues to focus on key risks that need to be managed within the Department's mandate and to fulfill the public's expectations. These trends and issues are assessed and managed through specific goals, objectives, and key actions in the performance plan.

RISKS TO HUMAN HEALTH

The public is increasingly concerned about the link between personal health and environmental contaminants, especially concerning water, air quality and in relation to children's health. Toxic

and hazardous wastes, including materials from various electronic appliances, such as computers, represent a growing risk to human and environmental health. The public is also concerned about wildfires, smoke from fires and diseases in wildlife populations (e.g., Chronic Wasting Disease and West Nile virus). Much of Saskatchewan Environment's activity in dealing with risks to human health produce a need to inform the affected public about possible exposure to transmissible diseases, wildfire and what individuals can do to reduce their risks.

RISKS TO ECOSYSTEM HEALTH, BIODIVERSITY AND ABUNDANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Saskatchewan Environment has noted in past plans that the loss of native prairie and grassland habitat to different land uses is a key concern, followed by forest harvesting practices. Of the four major ecozones in Saskatchewan, the Prairie Ecozone remains the most at risk due to the cumulative effects of extensive settlement and ongoing economic development. Concern remains over biodiversity loss, the fragmentation and destruction of natural habitat, and invasive species. The loss of wetlands and riparian areas also continues to threaten productive ecosystems, particularly in the parkland region of the Prairie Ecozone. In addition to the current 15 species formally designated as 'at risk', another 32 species have been identified as potentially meeting the 'at risk' criterion and are slated for protection under species at risk regulations. The Boreal Plain Ecozone supports the next greatest level of human activity and provincial population. In contrast, the Taiga and Boreal Shield Ecozones in the northern half of the Province are sparsely populated and the area remains largely undisturbed. Considerable uncertainty remains about the impact of climate change on Saskatchewan. These risks remain important and are being managed on an ongoing basis. The Biodiversity Action Plan is helping to guide government conservation action in ways that balance environmental, social and economic values that are at the heart of many of the issues impacting ecosystem health and biodiversity in the Province.

RISKS OF SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT OVER RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS AMONG DIFFERENT USERS

Saskatchewan Environment allocates renewable resources and land among different users and in doing so manages competing requests or overlapping uses. The demand for access to provincial renewable natural resources for economic developments, such as commercial fishing, outfitting, ecotourism, and forestry is increasing. Saskatchewan Environment's challenge is to satisfy these demands within the sustainable capacity of the resource base. When considering demands, Saskatchewan Environment must take into account the recent Supreme Court *Powley* and *Blais* decisions confirming Métis Aboriginal rights for subsistence fishing and hunting and the *Haida* and *Taku* decisions on the duty of government to consult. First Nations also seek to have a greater decision-making authority over resource management and they are aware of the legal duty placed on government to consult when government actions, legislation or policies impact on their rights. In addition, they seek economic opportunities on what they consider their traditional lands. Because of the changing interpretation around the duty to consult for government, uncertainty over resource developments will likely continue. One important tool to

addressing these and other similar concerns is integrated land use planning, which is an ecosystem-based tool that links the environment, the community and the economy in ways that help ensure the sustainability of resources.

RISKS THAT AFFECT THE ABILITY OF THE PROVINCIAL ECONOMY TO GENERATE JOBS, REVENUE AND GREATER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY

In the short-term, the softwood lumber dispute and its impact on the provincial forest industry is perhaps the most significant risk faced by the Department in terms of impact on the economy. The industry is, however, surviving the dispute reasonably well, largely due to the encouragement from the provincial government in the late 1990's to modernize mills, which has resulted in a very competitive industry. Also related to the forest are concerns about the impact of forest fires and forest disease upon the industry and local communities. Creating greater opportunity for Aboriginal people is an ongoing challenge in an environment of competing demands and limited resources. Ecological and economic values are integrated through a long-term perspective on management of the Province's resources and interests.

RISKS THAT AFFECT SASKATCHEWAN ENVIRONMENT'S CAPACITY TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE SERVICES

Saskatchewan Environment manages increasing demand for services and increasing costs of providing service delivery through prioritization of Department resources, which is guided by risk assessment, professional judgement and careful planning. An important project now underway that will assist in future capacity management is development of a risk-based compliance plan, which, when complete, is intended to help clarify priorities, allocation of effort and alternative approaches. The Department restructuring that occurred in 2004-05 included dissolving the Department's regional reporting structure and replacing it with functional lines of reporting and abolishing 137 Full-Time Equivalent positions. Several branches were amalgamated and new work units created. Key goals of the reorganization focus on strengthening accountability, risk-based priorities, continuous self-evaluation and pursuit and adoption of best practices.

RISKS AFFECTING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PLAN

The unpredictable nature of natural disturbances to the environment results in various unplanned expenditures for the Department. Of most significance is fire suppression; however, outbreaks of wildlife diseases or the invasion of noxious exotic species can also require a shift in expenditures which cannot be anticipated and cannot be reflected in the Department's strategic plan. There may also be secondary impacts of forest fires and forest disease upon the forest industry and local communities.

The Department's shift in strategic approach demands different professional skills and a capability to apply new knowledge and technologies to be successful. Saskatchewan Environment sees needs for skills in areas such as landscape and ecosystem modeling, remote sensing, biometric analysis and limnology. There is a growing gap between Saskatchewan Environment's current demographic and the competencies the Department needs in advanced computer applications, landscape modeling, and ecological science.

Actions by external jurisdictions occur in response to their own domestic needs and relationships with other jurisdictions. There is a wide range of intergovernmental issues with strategic and financial implications with potential to affect the Department's effectiveness in implementing its plan.

While Saskatchewan Environment has some latitude to manage these risks, a number of factors influence potential responses, including: legal obligations, contracts, the Province's commitment to forest industry expansion and northern economic development, and government priorities in allocating limited financial resources. Intergovernmental issues can be very time consuming and divert resources from other important priorities. These risks are currently managed by monitoring the issues, the opportunity, and weighing the potential benefits from engagement at appropriate times against other important priorities.

Changes from 2004-05 Performance Plan

For 2005-06, Saskatchewan Environment has made refinements to three of the 13 objectives in the performance plan, but essentially continues its gradual shift in direction to place greater emphasis on self compliance and shared responsibility. Five performance measures were deleted, two were improved and five new measures have been added. Each key action has been reviewed to ensure consistency with strategic direction and updated, deleted, or new ones added.

The following three objectives have been refined to more fully reflect the Department's intent.

Previous

Clean air

Clean land

Healthy Ecosystems

Revised

Reduced risks to the health of people and the environment from air quality

Reduced risks to people and the environment from contaminated land

Healthy ecosystems that support native biological diversity are stable and capable of self-repair

On an annual basis, the Department reviews its performance measures, assesses weakness and works on developing new measures to improve its measurement set. The Department's 2005-06 plan includes the following new measures:

- Per cent of paint recycled
- Per cent of e-waste recycled
- Economic impact of Saskatchewan's provincial parks
- Number of angling licenses sold
- Number of municipal waterworks which meet minimum treatment requirements

The following five performance measures have been removed from the Department's 2005-06 plan:

- Per cent of used oil filters recycled – recycling of used oil filters has reached target levels. The program continues to be lead by industry and monitored by Saskatchewan Environment
- Per cent of used oil containers recycled – recycling of used oil containers has reached target levels. The program continues to be lead by industry and monitored by Saskatchewan Environment
- Number of known high-risk contaminated sites – the six identified high-risk contaminated sites have been cleaned up through the assistance of the Centenary Fund (2000-2004). Only minor work and monitoring remain on two sites – Woodland Campus and Kamsack Refinery
- Dollar value of primary forest products shipped – data is not consistently available from sources
- Dollar value of economic activity generated from sports fishing – data has a lag-time of five years, therefore the Department is unable to report progress on an annual basis

The Department made a minor wording change to the measure of park visitors and expanded the scope of one of its measures "Per cent of human-caused wildland fires." Last year, the scope of this measure was limited to human-caused fires occurring in the full response zone. This expansion was made to provide a fuller perspective on human-caused fires.

Goals, Objectives, Actions and Measures

This section details the Department's performance plan for 2005-06 that supports advancement towards our vision of a high quality environment and healthy ecosystems in perpetuity that sustain social, health and economic well-being for Saskatchewan citizens. Under each goal, a number of objectives have been set to support progress towards the broader goal statement. For each objective, a set of key actions have been established that will be completed in 2005-06. They are the means for making progress toward the objectives. A set of performance measures has been developed to gauge progress towards meeting each objective.

Saskatchewan Environment generates revenue of approximately \$62 million annually (comprised of \$45.6 million to the provincial General Revenue Fund, approximately \$16.4 million of additional revenue) and is budgeting for expenditures in 2005-06 of \$172.036 million. A key factor with significant impact on the Department's operating costs and performance results is weather conditions. Hot dry weather increases the likelihood and severity of forest fires thereby impacting both performance measurement results (per cent of fires in the full response zone contained to 10 hectares or less; per cent of escaped fires in the full response zone larger than 100 hectares) and overall program costs. Weather also affects the number and satisfaction levels of park visitors, which in turn impacts revenue to the Department and economic impact of nature-based tourism in the Province. Key factors influencing costs and performance results in relation to each objective are also described within each objective and performance measure.

The following principles guide all of the Department's activities: Ecosystem Approach, Prevention, Risk Assessment, Precaution, Shared Responsibility, Integration, Stewardship, Full Information on Costs, and Accountability.

Protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment **GOAL 1** *Improve the quality of the natural environment*

Reduced risks to clean and healthy ecosystems

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Reduce impacts to surface and groundwater quality*

Good quality surface and groundwater is essential to protect human and animal health, as well as to support economic and social uses. Saskatchewan Environment programs set water quality standards and guidelines for both surface and groundwater, promote pollution prevention and safe use, respond to specific risks and threats and regulate water and sewage discharges from large point sources such as municipalities and industrial users. Saskatchewan Environment also ensures water quality is monitored and assessed.

Progress on drinking water initiatives is reported through the government-wide *Safe Drinking Water Strategy*. Saskatchewan Environment leads implementation of this plan, which involves several government departments and agencies, and publicly reports on its implementation.

Saskatchewan continues to face growing pressure in terms of water demand. Trends in climate change indicate that proper protection and management of water sources will become increasingly important to meet both quantity and quality demands. Key factors that have the potential to drive the cost of water source protection programs include effects of climate change and related agriculture and land use issues, energy, industry, irrigation and domestic consumption demands, and risk of water source contamination.

Saskatchewan Environment uses the Water Quality Index as a measure of performance results for this objective. The Department will, over time, expand the application of this measure to more watersheds and explore the feasibility of broadening the measures used for this objective to include a measure of water use per capita.

The Province created the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority (SWA) in 2002 to develop new approaches to address water use and protection concerns. Saskatchewan Watershed Authority is working with stakeholders to help develop public stewardship programs for many of the Province's watersheds.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Review and update Saskatchewan's Surface Water Quality Objectives.
- Develop storm water runoff management guidelines.
- Lead development of the federal-provincial Municipal Wastewater Effluents Project.

What are we measuring?

Water Quality Index (WQI) ratings for watersheds within the Province

Where are we starting from?

Qu'Appelle River – fair to good¹

South Saskatchewan River – good to excellent

North Saskatchewan River – good to excellent

Saskatchewan River – good to excellent

[March 2004]

¹ There are two locations in the Qu'Appelle Basin where the quality would be considered marginal for protection of aquatic life. The basin ranges from fair to excellent for livestock watering and irrigation purposes.

The Water Quality Index, which is based on the national index developed by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, is an overall measure of the quality of water for specific uses such as the protection of aquatic life, livestock watering and recreation. The index is a composite of measurement of different chemicals and organisms in the water at safe levels for a particular use. It is a good measure of the quality of surface or groundwater. The eight rivers currently monitored are: Qu'Appelle, South Saskatchewan, North Saskatchewan,

Saskatchewan, Souris, Assiniboine, Churchill, and Battle; however, baseline information is available for just the first four trans-boundary rivers.

The Department has little direct control over the results of this broad measure of water quality. Samples are collected by industries and municipalities in accordance with their permits, as well as by staff of Saskatchewan Environment and other agencies.

The assessment of all watersheds using the WQI is a long-term project. Saskatchewan Environment will be using the data collected from its primary monitoring stations on the major trans-boundary watersheds. The WQI rating in the Qu'Appelle River is expected to improve over the long-term as a result of watershed planning efforts led by SWA.

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Reduced risks to the health of people and the environment from air quality*

Clean air is essential for humans and most other life forms. Due to the low provincial population and moderate level of industrial activity, the air quality in Saskatchewan is generally good. Smog is rare, but acid precipitation from industry in Alberta is a potential problem, especially for parts of northern Saskatchewan. Airborne particulates, such as blowing dust and smoke from forest or stubble fires, cause the most noticeable air pollution concern. Other more localized issues are associated with intensive livestock operations, small manufacturing and processing plant emissions. There is also concern about the increasing levels of provincial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Saskatchewan Environment is responsible for administering *The Clean Air Act*, which regulates most major air quality emissions in the Province. The Department's strategy to manage these issues is to maintain standards and guidelines, promote pollution controls and reductions, respond to emerging risks and threats, regulate emissions from large point sources such as utilities, industrial sites and mining operations and monitor and assess air quality. Efforts are also focussed on reducing GHG emissions from electricity production through greater use of green energy sources such as wind, natural gas and ethanol in gasoline. Businesses and individuals are encouraged to be more energy conscious and efficient.

Key factors that can impact the cost of protecting air quality include economic growth in Saskatchewan, neighboring provinces and states that can result in increased trans-boundary drift of air pollutants, and weather and drought conditions that can result in increased forest fire activity and crop residue burning, both of which contribute to air-borne particulates. Increased emissions from the projected growth in the Alberta Oil Sands have the potential to significantly impact the long-term economic and cultural well being of northern residents.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Participate in development of and reporting on Canada-wide standards on air quality initiatives, and inter-jurisdictional monitoring and management of acid rain.
- Implement plan to improve administration of the Department's Air Quality Management Program including:
 - ~ Develop an operational protocol for the issuance of clean air permits
 - ~ Develop a compliance and enforcement plan

What are we measuring?

Per cent of time the rating from the Air Pollution Index is good to excellent in Regina and Saskatoon (based on an annual average)

Where are we starting from?

Regina – 98.2% good to excellent
Saskatoon – 99% good to excellent
[2003-04]

The air pollution index is used to monitor long-term trends in air quality. The index is a composite of data about measurements of chemicals and particulates in the air. Maintaining urban air quality is an important part of meeting this objective. Saskatchewan Environment has established monitoring stations in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert and is seeking to establish a suitable site in Swift Current. Over the longer-term, Saskatchewan Environment will also need to better define rural air quality impacts. The Department has little direct control over the results of this broad measure of air quality.

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Reduced risks to people and the environment from contaminated land*

Clean land is essential for human health and safe production of food. A range of human activities affects the quality of land and soils, and, therefore, the Department's performance results and program costs. The "polluter pays" principle helps to limit government liabilities. Discovery of new seriously contaminated sites where no responsible party can be found, or demand for new recycling initiatives, could affect future program costs. Most of the major land use issues have been identified and steps are being taken to address them; better agricultural and forest management practices are being adopted, contaminated sites and abandoned mines are being cleaned up, and the mining and petroleum industries are closely regulated to ensure they leave no long-term environmental effects. Waste management strategies are being developed and implemented, such as regional landfills and a variety of recycling initiatives.

Saskatchewan Environment's strategy to address this objective is to continue programs that set standards and guidelines, monitor and assess soil quality and waste management practices, promote waste reduction and recycling initiatives, respond to risks and threats, and regulate disposal from large point sources, such as municipalities, utilities, large industrial emitters and mining operations.

Saskatchewan Environment uses a series of eight output measures that report on waste minimization through recycling rates and the per cent of mines with financial assurances and the per cent of mines with reclamation and decommissioning plans. The Department will continue to look for insightful measures of performance for this objective.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Implement an electronics recycling program for Saskatchewan.
- Implement new paint recycling initiatives throughout the Province.
- Develop plan to address abandoned mines.
- Develop and implement a Hazardous Substance Spills/Contaminated Site web page to inform the public on the location of current and past spills within the Province.

What are we measuring?

Where are we starting from?

Recycling rates for the following:

• Scrap tires	65%
• Beverage containers	87%
• Pesticide containers	70%
• Used oil	79%
	[2003-04]
• Paint	0%
• E-waste	0%
	[2003-04]

Recycling is a waste minimization indicator. Benchmark percentages reported in the recycling program are based on the proportion of total annual product sales in the Province. The Department administers the enabling regulations for a number of third-party stewardship programs. Saskatchewan Environment has no direct influence on the rate, rather, market conditions determine the recycling rates.

What are we measuring?

Where are we starting from?

Per cent of mines with financial assurances in place	71%
	[2003-04]

Properly reclaimed mining sites impact the clean land objective directly by returning the site to its original natural state. Mining companies are required to have decommissioning plans and financial assurances in place to ensure that they do not place a burden on Saskatchewan taxpayers should they fail to meet their decommissioning and reclamation obligations. The Department directly regulates the environmental aspects of mining operations and therefore directly influences measure results.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of mines with decommissioning and reclamation plans in place

Where are we starting from?

85%
[2003-04]

Decommissioning and reclamation plans put in place by mining companies ensure environmental protection at the end of the operation's life. The Department directly regulates the environmental aspects of mining operations and therefore has a direct influence over the measurement results.

OBJECTIVE 4 – *Healthy ecosystems that support native biological diversity are stable and capable of self-repair*

Ecosystem-based management is an approach that involves a holistic 'systems' perspective to managing resources. Biodiversity is a term used to refer to the variety of species and ecosystems and the ecological processes of which they are a part. Biodiversity is essential for preserving the health and diversity of living things that form the web of life on earth, including human life. Loss of ecological health can mean a loss of the system's ability to self-repair and a cycle of continuing deterioration. Such deterioration can reduce, or in some cases eliminate, the goods and services that an ecosystem provides, such as water purification or flood control, pest control, medicinal plants and food, such as fish. Replacement of these services or restoration of the ecosystem is often very costly and in the worst cases, the service or goods may be lost from an area entirely. Due to human activity, some ecosystems and specific fauna and flora within them are at risk or have been lost. It is important that human activities do not further reduce ecosystem health. Adopting an ecosystem-based approach to resource management and environmental protection will help to ensure ecological sustainability.

Key factors that have an impact on measurement results include price fluctuations in resource and agricultural commodities, and public environmental concerns. Typically, when resource and agriculture sectors are experiencing higher activity there is increased demand to use natural landscape and wetland areas. As a result, environmental lobby groups apply pressure to increase the pace of landscape planning and protection. This, in turn, can influence program costs.

Key programming includes the development of ecosystem management policies, enhancement of scientific information and databases through monitoring and surveys, and resource stewardship programs and plans, such as the Biodiversity Action Plan, Representative Areas Network and Species at Risk.

Saskatchewan Environment now has one output measure for this objective. This measure is important because land in the Representative Areas Network is protected for the future and it also serves as a benchmark to monitor changes across the broader landscape. Over time, the Department will broaden its measures for this objective to provide an indication of ecosystem health.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Complete an annual report on progress of implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Continue development and management of a system of protected areas that are representative of the Province's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
- Ensure renewal of harvested areas within the provincial forests:
 - ~ Survey areas covered by the Pasquia-Porcupine Forest Management Agreement and Island Forests to determine actual regeneration status
 - ~ Site preparation of approximately 1,500 hectares
 - ~ Plant approximately 2.0 million trees
 - ~ Tend approximately 1,750 hectares
- In co-operation with federal/provincial/ territorial jurisdictions, lead development of a national strategy for the management of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in the wild in Canada.

What are we measuring?

Number of hectares in the Representative Areas Network

Where are we starting from?

5.96 million
[2004-05]

Adequate amount and distribution of natural/native habitats under the Representative Areas Network (RAN) ensures that terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems persist into the future and serve as a benchmark against which we can monitor the effectiveness of environmental stewardship across the broader landscape.

Natural landscapes with representative fauna and flora unique to a given natural ecoregion are selected by the Department for designation as a representative ecological site for inclusion in the RAN. All contributing lands are counted, including those of government and non-government partners. The RAN program is striving to ensure an adequate percentage of representation of each natural ecoregion in the Province.

Saskatchewan Environment has direct site designating and management influence over this measure. However, the need to consult with local interests may result in a slower rate of progress.

GOAL 2

People, resources and property values at risk from wildfires are protected

OBJECTIVE 1 – Fire suppression targeted to prioritized values at risk

The expanding uses of the forest, the increasing population of northern Saskatchewan and the escalating costs of fire suppression are placing unprecedented challenges on the Province's fire management program. As predicted climate warming occurs, additional pressures for fire protection over the long-term can be expected. However, newly realized ecological benefits of fire challenge traditional views that all fires must be suppressed. Allowing fires to burn creates a natural vegetation mosaic and maintains the diversity of natural habitats. Fires help remove the build up of natural litter in the forest, reducing the risk of large, intense and costly fires. Fire also assists in moderating insect and disease infestations. Prescribed fires are used in selected provincial parks as part of vegetation management. In the broader forest landscape, the challenge is to find the proper balance between fire suppression to protect values at risk and the management of fire to maintain healthy and diverse ecosystems.

Protection of human life and communities from wildfires will continue to be the program's top priority. Effective fire protection includes prevention, detection, initial attack, and sustained action. A number of support requirements are essential for fire suppression operations, including training, equipment and fuel procurement, air tankers, and related infrastructure. Saskatchewan Environment must seek to manage risks where capital and operating expenditures are considerable. Protection strategies reflect the values being threatened and the potential beneficial aspects of each fire. Decisions balance the risk fire poses to all values with the capability to provide protection in a given situation.

Saskatchewan Environment has two output measures for this objective that provide a good indication of how well the program is performing in the full response zone. As the Department gains experience with its reclassified zones, it will develop measures of program performance in the modified and the observation zones.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- As part of implementing a 10-year, \$200 million fleet renewal strategy, replace three bird dog planes and two of four land-based tanker aircraft, research options for the timing of replacing the skimmer fleet, and improve program infrastructure.
- Renew First Nation and northern community contracts to supplement fire suppression capacity.
- Improve occupational health and safety training in the fire program.
- Erect 20 new fire towers to reduce reliance on aerial detection systems.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of fires in the full response zone contained to 10 hectares or less

Where are we starting from?

92%
[2004 fire season]

The percentage of contained fires is a measure of how well the pre-planning, detection and initial attack components of the program are performing in concert. Containing fires to small sizes will minimize the number of communities threatened by fire as well as reduce the area burned and the costs associated with fire suppression. Saskatchewan Environment's performance results and operating costs depend on a number of factors: analysis of the landscape and its vulnerability to fire starts (e.g., moisture levels, wind speed and direction, fuel type), effective planning to pre-position resources in areas where fire might be expected, ease of access to the location of the fire, topography of fire location, early detection of fires, rapid/effective initial attack and quick reliable support from aircraft.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of escaped fires in the full response zone that are larger than 100 hectares

Where are we starting from?

0.5%
[2004 fire season]

Note: 2004 was a wet year resulting in a low number of escaped fires. Previous six-year average was 4.2 per cent.

Escaped fires are an unavoidable occurrence in forest fire programs. Uncontrollable circumstances, such as poor detection conditions; multiple fire starts; dry, windy burning conditions; the volatility of the fuel; proximity to resources to allow for successful initial attack; topography; and the time of the year can all combine to create conditions that allow fires to grow beyond 100 hectares. Resources to suppress fires escalate as the fire size grows, so costs also grow quickly.

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Increased capacity of individuals, communities, industries and others to take responsibility for reducing fire hazards and wildfires*

Wildland fires pose a threat to people, property and natural resources. Residents, communities and businesses need to take precautionary actions to protect their interests. Reducing the risk of wildland fire is a key priority for the provincial fire management program.

The challenge of current programming is to increase co-operation and training among fire management agencies and foster a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of municipal fire management jurisdictions in the Province. Other specific initiatives are focussed on vegetation management in provincial parks and on Crown lands, and on educating and encouraging individuals, businesses, communities, cottagers and visitors to the North to prevent wildland fires and reduce wildfire risks.

Saskatchewan Environment now has one measure for this objective. The measure focuses on individuals, while the objective includes individuals, communities and industry. The Department is working to broaden its measures for this objective to provide insight on performance in relation to communities and industry; for example, the Department is now working on a measure of communities with safeguards in place.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Deliver a high profile public awareness campaign to reduce human-caused fires and encourage people active in the forest to take responsibility to avoid or mitigate risk from fires.
- Increase the capacity of municipalities to suppress wildfires and encourage greater self-sufficiency for fire management outside the provincial forests through training.
- Develop fuel management strategies to reduce landscape fire risk augmented with forest harvesting guidelines and updated priority zones.

What are we measuring?

Percentage of human-caused wildland fires

Where are we starting from?

49%

[2004 fire season]

The wildland fire prevention education and awareness campaign is designed to reduce the percentage of human-caused wildland fires by encouraging individuals to recognize their responsibility for containing the fires they start, by providing individuals with the information they need to be aware of the risks of starting a wildfire, and to use fire more safely. Increasing this awareness is intended to reduce the percentage of human-caused fires, which typically occur closer to communities and resort properties where more people are located. The Department has indirect influence over this measure.

GOAL 3

Fair opportunity for sustainable use and enjoyment of renewable resources

OBJECTIVE 1 – Equitable allocation of natural renewable resources

Saskatchewan Environment ensures an equitable allocation of land and resources to competing interests to satisfy environmental, social and economic needs. Conflict over resource use can impinge upon existing uses, delay or stop potential developments, or negatively impact the quantity or quality of natural renewable resources. Saskatchewan Environment programs monitor health and abundance of the resources, set standards and guidelines for sustainable use, issue land disposition and resource allocations, promote and monitor compliance with conditions, respond to specific risks and threats, improve the health and abundance of the resources, and identify new economic opportunities for sustainable use.

Integrated land use planning is one of the key tools the Department uses to assist in maintaining ecosystem health and determining an equitable allocation of resources among competing users within a designated geographic area. The process provides the opportunity for all impacted resource users to be involved in developing a land use and resource management plan for large or small areas. The planning process and the subsequent implementation of the plans consider sustainability over the long-term. Over the past 10 years, six plans have been completed encompassing more than seven million hectares. There are currently six additional plans in progress, encompassing over five million hectares.

A key factor that impacts performance results, and, to some extent program costs, is supply and demand for commodities, which in turn drives research, exploration and development activity in the resource sector. Integrated land use planning is often used to keep a balanced perspective among sustainable economic development, environmental, and cultural and traditional use concerns. Consultation and communication processes inherent in integrated land use plans are key factors in stakeholder acceptance of allocation of natural renewable resources.

Saskatchewan Environment has one output measure for this objective. The Department is working on developing a broader range of measures for the different types of resource allocation.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Continue planning processes that result in the preparation, finalization and implementation of integrated land use plans to guide protection, management and allocation of Crown resource lands in the Province (projects include: North Central, Pinehouse-Dipper, Nisbet Forest, Fort a la Corne, Great Sand Hills, Buffalo Pound, Pasquia-Porcupine, Prince Albert Model Forest, La Ronge Corridor, Amisk-Atik, Manitou and Clearwater-Northwest).
- Begin implementation of the Great Sand Hills Regional Environmental Study.
- Undertake productivity surveys on Saskatchewan Environment's fisheries monitoring lakes (benchmark legacy lakes) to determine if current levels of harvest are appropriate and if lakes can sustain increased allocations.
- Begin development of a new Provincial Fisheries Management Strategy.

What are we measuring?

Number of hectares of Crown land under
Integrated Land Use Plans (ILUP)

Where are we starting from?

7.3 million hectares
[2004-05]

Integrated land use planning is an ecosystem-based tool that links the environment, the community and the economy in ways that help ensure the sustainability of resources. The unification of the many varied interests through the ILUP process requires time, commitment, a high level of participation and money. Any influences that adversely affect any of these four key components will result in at least a degree of loss of control or influence over the measure.

OBJECTIVE 2 – Accessible recreation and educational opportunities on provincial park and Crown resource lands

Crown lands and provincial parks are public assets administered by Saskatchewan Environment for public use and enjoyment. These areas provide economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits to the Province. Saskatchewan Environment's park programs maintain park landscapes and buildings to promote a high-quality visitor experience within a natural setting, set standards and policies for sustainable use and enjoyment of parks, monitor and enforce policies essential to a safe and enjoyable park experience, promote tourism and business development opportunities within parks and in nearby communities and manage overlapping demands from competing park users. The Department also leases and permits the sale and use of Crown land and resources, such as expanding the access to cottage opportunities in parks and on resource Crown lands across the Province.

The Commercial Revolving Fund (CRF) is utilized to manage annual operating budgets for provincial parks. Three-year averages are used to establish annual revenue projections and set the operating budgets for each park location. Weather plays the largest role in determining the degree of success and financial stability of the park program because of its impact on annual park visitation.

Saskatchewan Environment has two measures for this objective, one output and one quality (satisfaction) measure. While this objective is focussed on both park and Crown resource lands, data sources for measures related to Crown resource lands are currently not available. The Department is developing a plan for future direction of provincial parks which may help inform choices about future performance measures for this objective.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Complete implementation of the provincial parks centennial promotion, including special celebration events and interpretive programs.
- Complete development of a plan for the future direction of provincial parks.
- Continue judicious implementation of a new cottage development program, in consultation with First Nations, provincial park cottagers and other interest groups.

What are we measuring?

Where are we starting from?

Number of provincial park visitations

2,492,384
[2003-04]

Number of visitations to provincial parks is a measure of park access and popularity. Tracking this number helps Saskatchewan Environment evaluate the success of its park policies and related programs. Except for the weather conditions influencing park visits, Saskatchewan Environment has direct influence on the demand for provincial park use through marketing, park fees and recreation opportunities provided.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of survey respondents indicating satisfaction with their park visitations

Where are we starting from?

77%
[2003-04]

Saskatchewan Environment provides access to natural and cultural areas and recreational facilities and services in our provincial parks. Park visitor satisfaction levels assess, from the visitor's perspective, the results of these activities. Saskatchewan Environment's parks-related programs and facilities directly influence visitor satisfaction.

OBJECTIVE 3 – Increased economic benefits based on sustainable use of natural renewable resources

Sustainable use of natural resources contributes more than \$1.3 billion to the provincial economy. Forestry initiatives in northern Saskatchewan create thousands of jobs and expand business opportunities. Nature-based tourism (hunting, fishing, camping, etc.) generates millions of dollars annually in economic activity. Provincial parks alone trigger a net increase in economic activity of \$64.2 million, a gross domestic product impact of \$35.9 million, and 1,044 full-time jobs as reported in the Derek Murray Consulting Associates 2004 report, *Economic and Social Impact Assessment of Saskatchewan's Provincial Parks*.

Saskatchewan Environment programs seek to identify, promote, and develop opportunities for additional use of natural resources with the involvement and support of affected communities, the private sector, Aboriginal groups, and other users of the landscape. Activities supporting this process include identifying the size and accessibility of resources and assessing the potential for sustainable use.

Saskatchewan Environment has four output measures for this objective. The objective focuses on both economic impacts and sustainable use. One of the measures focuses on sustainable use, though it is limited to the forested area of the Province. One of the measures is on economic impact of provincial parks, one is a proxy measure of economic impact and the fourth is a measure of use of one resource. Over time, the Department will bring greater consistency to its economic performance measures and broaden its sustainable use measures to encompass more resources.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- In conjunction with Tourism Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Centennial 2005 Office and other partners, implement 2005-06 marketing plan for provincial parks to expand tourism in the Province.
- Analyze inventory of unallocated forest areas to determine quality and size of raw materials for potential new industrial development.
- Develop a "changed circumstance" proposal necessary to resolve softwood lumber trade dispute with United States of America. Implementation is dependent on success of negotiations between federal governments.

- Develop allocation and forest management agreement amendments to attract one major softwood user to the Province to accommodate changes in mill ownership in Pasquia-Porcupine supply area.

What are we measuring?

Number of hectares of Crown lands within the provincial forest having a suite of sustainable management tools in place

Where are we starting from?

7.0 million
[2003-04]

Sustainability of the forest industry is dependent on a wide variety of factors. The number of hectares of Crown land within the Commercial Forest that have in place a comprehensive suite of management programs, including adequate forest inventory, reforestation plans, appropriate environmental assessments, Forest Management Agreements and land use plans is a new measure, or indicator, of sustainable use of Saskatchewan's provincial forest resources. The Department has direct influence over this measure because sustainable management tools are Department lead.

Factors that influence forestry development initiatives include lack of infrastructure in remote areas, market demands and opportunities for value added products.

What are we measuring?

Dollar value of commercial fishing and aquaculture production

Where are we starting from?

\$10.5 million
[2003-04]

Revenue to commercial fishers and value of aquaculture production contribute to the economy of the Province.

Saskatchewan Environment has some influence over this measure for commercial fishing through designating and assigning catch quotas for commercial fishing sites, and for aquaculture through evaluation and approval of commercial aquaculture proposals from the industry.

Factors such as market conditions, weather, forest fires and job changes by fishers affect the measurement results. The data to gauge progress towards this measure has a lag-time of more than one year.

What are we measuring?

Economic impact of Saskatchewan's provincial parks

Where are we starting from?

\$35.9 million
[2002-03; latest available data]

Thirty-three per cent of all visits to provincial parks include tourists who come from outside the Province and Saskatchewan residents who travel more than 199 km to a park. Any expenditure that they make during a stay at the park, and the Government's expenditures on provincial parks, increases the economic activity and impacts the GDP.

Factors such as weather and gas prices can impact the number of visits, length of stay and visitors' expenditures.

What are we measuring?

Number of angling licences sold

Where are we starting from?

182,000

[2003-04]

Sport fishing is an important element of nature-based tourism that contributes to the economy of the Province. Saskatchewan Environment has some influence over sport fishing through fishing regulations. Factors like the weather, licence fees and sport fishing quotas affect sport fishing in the Province.

GOAL 4

Shared environmental stewardship

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Comprehensive and integrated environmental strategies*

This objective reflects a strategic shift in the way the Department intends to deliver its mandate. Many issues facing the environment are changing. They are often more spread out across the landscape, such as water pollution, air pollution and the invasion of exotic species. Others result from a large number of small individual actions, such as habitat fragmentation. Still others cross provincial or national boundaries, such as climate change. These types of issues are more likely to be effectively handled through approaches featuring partnerships, education, economic instruments and technical innovation, rather than a more formal regulatory approach.

Over the coming years, Saskatchewan Environment will gradually complement its traditional command-and-control regulation with an approach featuring increased emphasis on shared responsibility among the regulated community, NGO's, the public and the science/technical community. Saskatchewan Environment's strategy to pursue this goal now incorporates two main initiatives. The first is development of a Green Strategy for the Province. This government-wide plan will better integrate environmental, social and economic considerations through improvements to policy integration and regulatory reform, implementation of ecosystem-based approaches, such as those reflected in the Biodiversity Action Plan, and greater diversification of environmentally friendly technologies. The second is development of a compliance plan for the Department. The compliance plan will target Department activities to higher risk issues, facilitate development of a wider range of non-regulatory tools and improve application of fees and permits.

Saskatchewan Environment is working on developing a performance measure for this objective. A tentative measure has been chosen and the Department is working to establish baseline data.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Lead development of a government-wide Green Strategy that will contribute to integrated and shared responsibility for environmental protection and the development of a green and prosperous economy.
- Develop proposals for legislative reform and expansion of policy tools in order to broaden compliance approaches and streamline processes.

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 – *First Nations and Métis rights and interests are met through co-operative means*

The First Nation and Métis people have Treaty and Aboriginal rights and interests in the renewable natural resources administered by Saskatchewan Environment. The Department is committed to accommodating these rights and interests as well as ensuring conflicts with other societal needs are resolved in a co-operative manner.

Saskatchewan Environment is responsible for helping to fulfill the terms of Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) Agreements as they relate to Crown resource land. As of April 1, 2005 there were 41 active selection files involving 91,596 ha (226,331 acres) of Crown resource land administered by Saskatchewan Environment in the TLE review process. Sixteen selections totalling 11,717 ha (28,953 acres) have been purchased but are not yet reserves. Forty-two selections totalling 70,561 ha (174,355 acres) are now reserves.

First Nations seek greater decision-making authority over resource management. Changing interpretation over the duty to consult continues to contribute to uncertainty in resource development. Department programs seek to engage Aboriginal groups, government departments, the federal government and other institutions in working relationships that address one or more of the following goals: ensuring recognition and respect for Treaty and Aboriginal rights; conservation of species and habitats; involvement of Aboriginal communities in economic benefits derived from renewable resources; and building the capacity of First Nation and Métis communities and organizations to effectively co-operate in environment and resource management program and policy development. Programs within the Department are designed to create conditions through Aboriginal employment and cultural awareness that enable Saskatchewan Environment to effectively respond to Aboriginal interests and rights.

Saskatchewan Environment has one output measure for this objective. Over time the Department intends to develop a measure that provides insight on the effectiveness of its co-operative relationships with First Nations and Métis groups.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Refine the policy and enforcement guidelines on Métis subsistence rights as interpretation comes from the Courts (R vs Laviolette) and in consultation with Métis communities and other provincial departments.
- Work with First Nations and Métis Relations, Saskatchewan Justice, Northern Affairs and First Nations to develop a provincial policy on the duty to consult.
- Work co-operatively with Entitlement First Nations to help them acquire the land they are entitled to purchase pursuant to Treaty Land Entitlement Agreements.

What are we measuring?

Number of co-operative relationships with
First Nations and Métis groups

Where are we starting from?

89
[2003-04]

Saskatchewan Environment is collaborating with Aboriginal organizations at the provincial, tribal council and local band and community levels to create arrangements that result in benefits to the ecosystem, sustainable resource-based economic developments and improved consultation and Aboriginal involvement in decision-making.

A functional co-operative relationship with a First Nation organization means a formal (written) or informal (oral) agreement of co-operation, regular face-to-face meetings to address issues at hand or to develop mutually beneficial natural resource management policies.

The Department has direct influence over these relationships through the ability to establish formal agreements and/or through addressing controversial resource management issues by face-to-face discussions.

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Strengthened and comprehensive compliance strategies*

Compliance efforts are used to achieve Saskatchewan Environment's strategic goals and objectives. The compliance function is the effort that directly encourages the community to conduct themselves in accordance with requirements established by law, or to take action for positive effect on the environment. The Department's compliance model seeks to encourage voluntary compliance through information and education. When voluntary compliance appears to fail, efforts shift to prevention through targeted physical inspection, direct interaction and, when necessary, investigation and enforcement.

Saskatchewan Environment's scan and risk assessment suggest that the environmental problems of the future will require a more sophisticated combination of compliance tools, as well as a more focussed and risk-based management approach to prioritize compliance and enforcement activities. New ways to enhance compliance through partnerships, education, communications, and creative prevention programs are being examined. Efforts are also being made to more carefully match compliance tools to type and level of risk.

The Department has one output performance measure for this objective. The measure is focussed on an activity where compliance is critical to human health and that the Department has been working to improve compliance. Over time, the Department will develop measures to provide improved perspective on rates of compliance in some of the key areas of environmental impact and potentially to provide perspective on the breadth of strategies used by the Department to improve compliance.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Begin implementing a risk-based annual compliance plan including increased education and voluntary compliance techniques, and prioritized areas for active monitoring and enforcement.
- Establish a specialized prosecutor in Saskatchewan Justice.
- Develop with other departments and agencies a plan for renewal of dispatch and radio support.

What are we measuring?

Number of municipal waterworks which meet minimum treatment requirements

Where are we starting from?

25
[September 30, 2004]

Safe drinking water is critical to human health. Meeting minimum treatment requirements is a measure of infrastructure water treatment capability, and therefore of the safety of drinking water that they produce. Saskatchewan Environment has a high level of influence over this measure through the Department's regulations; however, because of significant costs for treatment upgrades, communities need time and encouragement to comply.

OBJECTIVE 4 – Effective and efficient environmental approval and regulatory processes

One of Saskatchewan Environment's key roles is to provide the environmental approval and regulations that govern people's actions, so the environment is protected for future generations. In addition to the numerous formal acts and regulations, the Department also uses less formal tools such as permits, establishing standards and guidelines, and industry self-regulation.

The Environmental Assessment Act is intended to facilitate economic opportunities that exhibit environmental integrity. Proponents prepare environmental impact statements early in the planning and design phase of projects to document the broader impacts of the development proposal on the social, economic and biophysical aspects of the area. In recent years, much work has been done in conjunction with the oil and gas industry to streamline the approval process, and facilitate understanding and resolution of environmental concerns early in the project planning stage. Saskatchewan Environment intends to work in conjunction with other sectors to further streamline the approval process, standardize environmental requirements, and examine more efficient permitting requirements.

Saskatchewan Environment's performance and cost to deliver these services are driven by case-load as dictated by the nature and number of development proposals being advanced at any particular time. On average about 250 project proposals are reviewed annually with six to 10 of them necessitating an environmental impact assessment.

Saskatchewan Environment is working on developing a performance measure for this objective. The Department is exploring the possibility of using a measure of client satisfaction, and is examining options to secure this information on a regular basis.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Lead the development of a policy for institutional controls of decommissioned mine sites.
- Implement and monitor hard rock exploration screening guidelines through the Saskatchewan Mining Industry/Government Environment Committee.
- Identify other specific sectors where potential exists to standardize environmental requirements and implement more efficient environmental permitting requirements.

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

For More Information

If you have any questions or comments about the plan, or would like additional copies, we invite you to call:

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